

OUTLINE BIBLE STUDY COURSES
OF
THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE

THE BOOK OF JOB
OR
THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING

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OUTLINE BIBLE STUDY COURSE
OF
THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE

THE BOOK OF JOB

A STUDY OF THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING AS TREATED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

THIS COURSE IS SELECTED FROM THE LONGER COURSE ON THE WORK OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SAGES, WHICH INCLUDES A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF PROVERBS, THE SONG OF SONGS, ECCLESIASTES, AND A GENERAL STUDY OF THE RELATION OF THE WORK OF THE SAGES TO THAT OF THE PRIESTS AND PROPHETS AND TO THE THOUGHT OF JESUS.

THE FEE OF TWENTY-FIVE CENTS PAID FOR THIS MATERIAL ENTITLES THE STUDENT TO MEMBERSHIP IN THE INSTITUTE FOR ONE YEAR, WITH PRIVILEGE OF CORRESPONDENCE, QUESTION SHEETS, AND CERTIFICATE FOR HIS WORK IF SATISFACTORILY DONE.

PREPARED BY
WILLIAM RAINEY HARPER



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FOREWORD TO THE STUDENT

1. *Work regularly.* Have a definite time for your work every day, and as regularly as possible use that time for your work.

2. *Read intelligently.* Consider as you read whether you understand what you are reading. If there is a word the meaning of which you do not know, look it up. Many such words can be found in any English dictionary; of others you will find explanation in footnotes on the Direction sheets. But do not, if you can avoid it, pass over a word without knowing what it means.

3. Remember that you are reading poetry and do not pass over the beautiful poetic form and imagery as if it were prose and you were looking only for facts or teachings. Read and re-read, and dwell upon the most striking passages, letting their beauty take root in your memory and your experience.

4. In order to appreciate or even to understand the meaning of any Hebrew poetry, it is necessary to acquaint oneself with one peculiarity in its form. The Hebrew poet depended for his poetic effect not upon the repetition of words of similar sound, as rhyme, but upon a device which we call parallelism—a relation of lines in the poem which belongs to the *thought* rather than the *form*. This parallelism may be expressed in three different ways: synonymous parallelism, in which the thought of one line of poetry is repeated in the following line in different words; antithetic parallelism, in which one line may present the affirmative expression of a thought and the following line the negative. In other words, there must be antithesis between the *meaning* of the lines. The third form is called synthetic parallelism, in which the thought of a line is completed in a later line or lines. A careful observance of this peculiarity in form will lead you to see that in many cases where you would naturally look for additional thought on the part of the poet, he is simply expressing the same thought in a different form. This relieves the poem from much apparent complexity in its interpretation.

From the foregoing it will be seen that a version of the Bible in which the form of the Hebrew poetry is clearly expressed typographically will be much easier to use in the study of this book. We would urge all students to use the American Standard Revised Version of the Bible, which can be purchased at any good bookstore in varying styles and at various prices.

5. Try to keep the outline in mind so that you can hold the argument as you pass from one day's work to another. A most helpful exercise in the study of this book is that of paraphrasing, that is, trying to write out in our own language the thought of a section or a speech. By reading this prose statement each day before going on with the reading the progress of the argument is clearly seen and a valuable record of the work is kept.

6. To gain the full force of the poem, read the history of Israel during the exile and the years following, when the national afflictions were such that they might well imagine God's face turned away, and his hand pressing hard in undeserved punishment. Whether the hero of the book was intended to present the problem of an individual life or of the nation, its force to the Hebrews lay in the fact of coincidence with their own history.

7. All study of the Bible should mold the heart and shape the life, but here as in the study of many other portions of the Bible, especially the Old Testament, it is the large or total teaching of a book which is to be accepted. Many have made the mistake of considering quotations of brief passages from the book of Job as binding on life today. If one considers the circumstances under which Job and his friends spoke, and the spirit in which they regarded these circumstances, one can easily see that the lessons for our own life are found rather in the attitude of the writer of the poem, than that of the characters in the poem. The attitude of the author can be determined only when one regards the poem as a whole with its significant outcome.

8. Since the specific directions for study and the outline in this course are taken from a longer course upon the "Work of the Old Testament Sages," the section numbers do not begin with the first but with the seventy-third section of the longer course.

INTRODUCTION

One of the elemental problems of humanity is that of suffering. Why should there be pain, calamity, disease, death? The earliest and simplest answer is that the gods bring these evils upon us because they please. The savage is a bully. He exercises his strength according to his pleasure; he therefore conceives of his god as a super-natural bully. He seeks to placate him with sacrifices and ceremonies to avert the evils that he may bring.

When the conception of an ethical God has been attained, suffering assumes a new significance. It is felt that God deals with man according to moral desert; prosperity is reward, calamity is punishment. This idea represents a great advance in moral and religious perception, and it contains a great fundamental truth. This world is so constituted that righteousness tends to health, long life, and prosperity, and wickedness tends to disease, death, and ruin. This is the great teaching of the early prophets of Israel, and is presented with peculiar force and with beautiful appeal in the noble orations of the Book of Deuteronomy. The Wise Men in their Proverbs utter the same truth in its application to practical and individual life.

But such a doctrine, which may be gloriously true in the large and in general, may be most seriously erroneous if applied with the rigidity of a definite law. It is one thing to say that righteousness tends to fortune, and quite another thing to say that the two are inevitably and invariably joined. It is one thing to say that wickedness often brings suffering, and an entirely different thing to say that suffering is always a punishment for sin. This narrow interpretation is very easily made, and apparently it came to be the orthodox view in Israel. To be sure, obvious facts would seem to contradict it at once, but nothing is easier than to explain away facts in the defense of a theory. It was said that if a wicked man were prosperous it was only temporary, and his calamity would be all the more significant when it came; and it was believed that if a good man suffered it was for some sin, perhaps unrecognized, and that his misfortune would soon pass if he would repent and confess.

But the problem of suffering is far deeper than the mere estimate of so much pain for so much sin. It may have been after the good Josiah, the best descendent of David that ever sat upon his throne, had gone to battle in the name of Jehovah and had been defeated and killed, that the awful question was asked: Why do the righteous suffer? It may have been the experience of Jeremiah, the pure self-sacrificing patriot, who spent his life for his countrymen and yet was misunderstood, hated, maltreated, and finally slain in a distant land, that gave a rude shock to the easy philosophy that good men always prosper. Or perhaps it was in the Exile, where the best spirits of Israel felt most bitterly the national disgrace, the deprivation of the temple, the loss of the fatherland, while the apostate Jews easily accepted the good things of Babylon, that the problem of the moral government of the world became intense. At all events, one master spirit of Israel found himself unable to accept the received opinion of his time, and after a period of awful doubt and despair (if we may believe that the Book of Job is fundamentally autobiographical), fought his way through the darkness of the problem into the light; not to a solution, for the Book of Job does not offer a solution to the problem, but to a strong religious faith that satisfied him and brought him peace. Then it came to him as an inspiration that he must bring to his despondent and troubled countrymen the same blessed faith. How should he do it? He might, if he were a prophet, go before the people and preach his truth. But he was not an orator. He was too meditative and introspective to discuss his theme in public speech. Another literary form that was open to him was the essay. He might discuss the current views, point out their inadequacy, present his own doctrine, defend it, and urge its truth. There was still another literary form in which, if he were a master genius of the first rank, he might present the whole problem to the mind. He could use the dramatic form. In some individual sufferer, ideally conceived, he could set forth his problem concretely. Then in the clash of dialogue he could bring forth the views which he felt to be inadequate and unreasonable and could demolish them, while in the action in the soul of his hero he could work out the problem as it only can be wrought out in human experience.

Thus the Book of Job is a dramatic poem. It is not, of course, history, but the name of Job, an ancient worthy known to tradition, is employed to designate the hero, who is by hypothesis "a perfect man," that is to

say, one against whom no charge of sin can be brought which could possibly give occasion for punishment. If this ideally conceived, good man should suffer every human calamity, the loss of fortune, of children, of health, of reputation, and should be brought to the point of a miserable and ignoble death, the moral problem connected with suffering would be presented in its most acute form.

That the matter may be discussed free from national limitations, the scene is placed outside of Israel "in the land of Uz," and apparently in patriarchal times. The well-known goodness of Job and his awful misfortunes might well shake faith in the common doctrine that suffering is always punishment, but three noble eastern princes representing the wisdom of tradition, themselves friends of Job and wishing him well, are prepared to defend their doctrine, in spite of all seeming difficulty.

So we have the conditions for the great debate. These conditions are presented in the prose prologue of the book, in which, too, a possible solution of the problem of suffering is suggested, namely, that it affords opportunity for the manifestation of disinterested faith in God. This is evidently felt to be only a possible solution, as it never is referred to again.

The debate is provoked by Job's breaking forth into the splendid and awful lyric curse. He does not assert that he ought not to suffer, but that he need not have been born or that he might be allowed to die. There follow then the three cycles of speeches. In the first, the friends insist upon the justice of God, Job denies that he is being treated justly. In the second they elaborate the well-recognized doctrine that the wicked always perish; Job denies the facts. In the third they accuse him of specific wrong-doing; he clears himself with a solemn oath. Then follows a series of speeches by Elihu, a young man who does not add very much to the discussion and whose speeches are thought by some scholars to be a later addition to the poem. Finally the climax is the speeches of Jehovah out of the storm, in which, with a splendid divine irony, Job is shown his ignorance in the presence of the vast and complex problem of the universe. Job sees God and is satisfied. His sufferings are not explained, but he knows that Jehovah is ruler and he is at peace. The quarreling, complaining soul that is crying for vindication, for justice, comes into a beautiful peace in the presence of God. The old theory is shattered of course, and there is no new theory, but there is peace. It is not the silence of fear but the silence of faith.

Very remarkable is the mere flash of the hope of immortality which occurs twice in the poem. Evidently the writer felt that if there could be a future life the problem of suffering might be solved, but he could not be sure. With wonderful genius he presents his doubting hope at two points, where Job is almost driven to desperation, and where the possibility of immortality saves him. But the hope remains only a possibility, and with the change of mood the sufferer ceases to find relief in his bold speculation of a life beyond Sheol.

With a fine recognition of the fundamental truth in the orthodox doctrine, a truth which would of course become universal in ideal conditions, the epilogue restores Job to full prosperity while rebuking the friends for their fatuous blindness. The writer thus declares his faith that some day it will be true that the good man will not suffer.

Moulton¹ has the following suggestive discussion of the literary character of the book:

For the treatment of so universal a subject Hebrew has advantages over other languages. It bases its verse system on a parallelism which is also a function of prose; accordingly it constitutes a highly elastic medium, which can shift at will from the measured beauties of verse to the freedom of prose, while the verse itself can reflect any change of feeling in some metrical variation. Again, what seems at first a defect of Hebrew literature in reality increases its range: the lack of a theatre to specialize drama has caused the dramatic impulse to spread through other literary forms, until epic, lyric, discourse, are all drawn together on a common basis of dramatic presentation. Thus of the two distinguishing features of Hebrew, the one draws together the different forms of poetry, and the other tends to unite poetry with prose. Thus in the Book of Job all these literary forms can be combined, and all the modes of thinking of which these forms are the natural vehicles. The bulk of the work is a philosophical discussion of the question of suffering, and different mental attitudes to this question are successively exhibited. But the philosophical discussion is also a dramatic debate: with rise and fall of passion, varieties of personal interest, quick changes in the movement of thought; while a background of nature, ever present, makes a climax in a whirlwind which ushers us into the supernatural. Interest of rhetoric is added for emphasis; the argument is swayed out of its course by sustained outbursts of verbal workmanship, such as are wont to rouse assemblies of men to strong feeling. Again, the situation, which is to be discussed with all these varieties of resource, is brought forward for discussion by a narrated story; a story so evenly poised between the two functions of story—epic and history—that readers

¹ *Modern Readers' Bible*, "Job," pp. 6 f.

are divided on the question whether the Book of Job is a narrative of fact or an imagined parable. All this does not exhaust the elements of this literary masterpiece. The human world which endures and meditates on the suffering is in the Book of Job presented as fringed round with another world, the region of transcendental existence from which prophecy draws its inspiration, and the question which is debated in the human drama has in the prologue been solved in the mysteries of heaven.

Davidson,¹ after considering the purpose of the book as the discussion of the great philosophic problem of suffering, deals as follows with its practical purpose:

In Job's sufferings undeserved and inexplicable to him, yet capable of an explanation most consistent with the goodness and faithfulness of God, and casting honor upon his faithful servants; in his despair bordering upon apostasy, at last overcome; in the higher knowledge of God and deeper humility to which he attained, and in the happy issue of his afflictions—in all these Israel may see itself, and from the sight take courage, and forecast its own history. What the author sets before his people is a new reading of their history, just as another new reading is set before them by the prophet in the latter part of Isaiah. The two readings are different, but both speak to the heart of the people. Job, however, is scarcely to be considered Israel, under a feigned name. He is not Israel, though Israel may see itself and its history reflected in him. It is the elements of reality in his history common to him with Israel in affliction, common even to him with humanity as a whole, confined within the straitened limits set by its own ignorance; wounded to death by the mysterious sorrows of life; tortured by the uncertainty whether its cry finds an entrance into God's ear; alarmed and paralyzed by the irreconcilable discrepancies which it discovers between its necessary thoughts of him and its experience of him in his providence; and faint with longing that it might come unto his place, and behold him not girt with his majesty but in human form, as one looketh upon his fellow—it is these elements of truth that make the history of Job instructive to the people of Israel in the times of affliction when it was set before them, and to men in all ages.

Peake² has the following criticism of the argument:

The artistic movement of the discussion had been disguised by the dislocation of the speeches in the third cycle of the debate. When they have been restored to their primitive condition the scheme followed by the author seems to have been as follows. In the first round of speeches the friends ply Job with the thought of God, Eliphaz dwelling on his transcendent purity, Bildad on his inflexible righteousness, and Zophar on his inscrutable wisdom. Failing to impress Job along this line, the friends in the second cycle of speeches paint lurid pictures of the fate of the wicked; after a life spent in torments he comes to a swift and miserable death, and his posterity is rooted out. In the third cycle Eliphaz directly charges Job with flagrant sin. But, instead of permitting the other friends as before to follow in the same strain, the poet secures variety by letting the debate double back on itself. The third speech of Bildad (25:2, 3; 26:5-14) repeats the theme of the first cycle, the incomparable greatness of God; the third speech of Zophar (27:7-10, 13-23) repeats the theme of the second cycle, the miserable fate of the wicked.

It must strike the reader as strange that the antagonists develop their arguments with such little reference to the case advanced by the other side. A western poet would have made the speakers submit the positions maintained by the opponent to a more searching criticism. But the poet is an Oriental, with far less care for pure reasoning. The friends have then settled beliefs about God and his government; nothing Job can say will move them. Hence in the first two cycles of the debate the three friends take substantially the same line, with very little reference to anything Job may have urged. Even the great passage, 20:25-27, might just as well not have been spoken, for all the influence it has on their subsequent speeches. Similarly Job, in several of his speeches, contents himself with some words of blistering sarcasm, and then pursues his own train of thought, without reference to what his antagonists have said, though when the case had been stated by all three of the speakers he pulverizes it. He neglects them because he is wholly engaged with God.

It is this preoccupation with God which gives Job's speeches their marvelous fascination. Quite apart from all the lofty qualities that make the book a perennial delight to lovers of poetry for its own sake, there is a situation whose development is followed with breathless eagerness. Here, indeed, in the history of a soul, rather than the discussion of a problem lies the supreme interest of the book.

¹Cambridge Bible, "Job," pp. xxvi f.

²The New Century Bible, "Job," pp. 10 ff.

THEODORE G. SOARES

ANALYTICAL OUTLINE.

II. THE BOOK OF JOB.

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| <p>§ 73. The Righteous Job and his Prosperity.
Job 1:1-5.</p> <p>§ 74. The Proposed Testing by the Satan.
Job 1:6-12.</p> <p>§ 75. The First Test.
Job 1:13-22.</p> <p>§ 76. The Second Test.
Job 2:1-8.</p> <p>§ 77. Job advised by his Wife to renounce God.
Job 2:9, 10.</p> <p>§ 78. The coming of the Three Friends.
Job 2:11-13.</p> <p>§ 79. Job's Lament: "Cursing his Day."
Job 3:1-26.</p> <p>§ 80. Eliphaz' Rebuke of the Despair of Job.
Job 4:2-11.</p> <p>§ 81. The Vision of Eliphaz.
Job 4:12-21.</p> | <p>§ 82. Eliphaz demonstrates the foolishness of Rebellion.
Job 5:1-7.</p> <p>§ 83. Eliphaz exhorts Job to turn to God.
Job 5:8-16.</p> <p>§ 84. Eliphaz predicts Restoration to Prosperity.
Job 5:17-27.</p> <p>§ 85. Job's first Reply: "I am Innocent yet Suffering."
Job 6:1-7:21.</p> <p>§ 86. Bildad's Explanation: Job is Guilty.
Job 8:1-22.</p> <p>§ 87. Job's Second Reply: "I am Innocent but unable to Contend with God."
Job 9:1-10:22.</p> <p>§ 88. Zophar's Explanation: Job's Sufferings less than he deserves.
Job 11:1-20.</p> <p>§ 89. Job's Third Reply: A Challenge to God.
Job chs. 12, 13, 14.</p> |
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SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY.

NOTE.—The section numbers refer to the sections of the preceding Outline.

Abbreviations: R. V., Revised Version of the Bible; A. V., Authorized or Old Version of the Bible; *cf.*, compare; *i. e.*, that is; *ff.*, following.

NOTE.—Do not deprive yourself of three-fourths of the satisfaction that may be gained from a study of the Book of Job by using the Old Version. Remember that the Book of Job is the greatest piece of poetic literature known to man, and that this poetry, as we have observed in the study of the Book of Proverbs, exhibits itself in what is called synonymous, antithetic, or synthetic parallelism. This parallelism is exhibited in the Revised Version in such a way as to make the book an entirely new book. It is impossible to understand any book without some comprehension of its literary spirit.

First day. § 73. Read Job 1:1-5, and study a beautiful family picture. Consider (1) his home (Where was Uz?), (2) his character, perfect, God-fearing, (3) his family (Are the numbers seven and three significant?), (4) his wealth, (5) the customary feasts of his children, (6) the father's piety and anxiety, knowing as he does the sins of his children. Notice the evident connection between the piety of Job and his happiness and prosperity.

Second day. § 74. Read Job 1:6-12, and study a scene in Heaven: (1) the sons of God assembled before Jehovah, the Satan (the accuser) among the rest; (2) consider similar scenes elsewhere; 1 Kings 22:19, Psalms 89:6, Zech. 3 (Is this Satan an evil spirit or an angel representing God, a testing, sifting Providence?); (3) Job cited by God as an example of piety; (4) the claim of the Satan that this piety is not disinterested; (5) permission given to test Job provided his body should not be touched.

Third day. § 75. Study the first test which Job was caused to endure, 1:13-22, and note (1) the scene of the banquet, (2) the four messengers each announcing destruction, the last the worst destruction of all, that of his sons and daughters, (3) Job's action in the intensity of his feeling, namely, rending his garments, etc., v. 20, (4) his words than which nothing can be more pathetic, v. 21, and (5) the verdict of the writer of the book that Job had stood the test satisfactorily and had not sinned, v. 22.

Fourth day. § 76. Now comes the second test, the first not being severe enough. The scene is again in Heaven, the sons of God assembled, 2:1-8. Notice (1) the statement of God that after all Job is righteous and upright, v. 3, and (2), in reply to this, the Satan's ready answer, that the test was not close enough. "Touch his body and he will curse thee," vs. 4, 5; (3) the permission given to test him, this time Job being smitten with a form of leprosy, painful, disgusting, loathsome, v. 7; (4) try to picture to yourself the condition of Job thus afflicted, the scorn of all about him as he scrapes himself with a potsherd, and sits in the darkness, v. 8.

Fifth day. § 77. Study the exquisite touch of the artist in (1) the encounter of Job with his wife, 2:9, 10, the latter advising him to curse God and die, (2) Job's rebuke,—"We receive good from God, shall we not also receive evil?" Observe that according to the writer of the book Job in all this did not sin.

Sixth day. Recall now the representation of the scene in Heaven, the symbolic numbers used in all these representations (for example 3, 7), the striking disasters sent upon Job, two of them being natural and two supernatural, all occurring in one day, only one person left each time to tell the story, and the story told each time in exactly the same words. Consider the question whether the record is to be regarded as actual history. Notice also that the picture of suffering given is that of an individual, but remember that it is a common custom of biblical writers to represent the nation as an individual. Consider the question whether the story of Job's suffering and his failure to understand the occasion of it, may not be, after all, the story of that portion of Israel in Babylon which had always been faithful to God, but notwithstanding this suffered by being taken away into captivity.

Seventh day. § 78. The next step in the progress of events is the coming of Job's three friends, 2:11-13. Try to get a picture of these men and a conception of their rank, ages, and wisdom. Remember that some time must have elapsed before they reached him, and note their surprise and grief upon seeing his condition, v. 12, their seven days' silence, v. 13, when, as a matter of fact they ought to have said something to Job of a sympathetic character.

Eighth day. § 79. Picture to yourself Job unable longer to restrain himself, weakened by disease, expecting sympathy, but finding it in neither wife nor friends, and read closely his passionate outburst, 3:1-10, the substance of which is (1) "Cursed be the *day* and the *night* of my birth," v. 3; (2) "Let that *day* be darkness and concealed by clouds, terrified by eclipses," vs. 4, 5; (3) "Let that *night* be swallowed by darkness and not counted. Let it be barren, let enchanters curse it, let it never end." Compare a similar outburst by Jeremiah, Jer. 20:14-18.

Ninth day. The outburst continues, sadder and more pathetic, 3:11-19, "Why died I not in the womb?" (vs. 11, 12), "and then I should have had the rest of Sheol" (v. 13), "with mighty kings" (v. 14), "with wealthy princes" (v. 15), "with dead-born babes" (v. 16); "where the wicked cease agitation" (v. 17), "where prisoners cease toiling" (v. 18), "where small and great are alike together" (v. 19); "and if it were necessary to be born, why should life be continued to the wretch who longs for death, and whose sufferings are so great as to give him no chance to recover" (vs. 20-26).

Tenth day. Read chapter 3:1-26 again, noticing that it falls naturally into three divisions, of which the first, vs. 1-10, may be summed up in the words, "Oh, that I had never been born;" the second, vs. 11-19, "Oh that I had died from my birth;" the third, vs. 20-26, "Oh that death might come to me, miserable and wretched man that I am." Consider further (1) how in this outburst Job pictures his own suffering, (2) the tone of mind which it exhibits, and the contrast between this, and that of the preceding chapters, and (3) the natural effect of such a speech upon his friends.

Eleventh day. § 80. Remembering that Eliphaz was the oldest of the friends, very godly, a prophet, calm, dignified, considerate, possessed of strong religious prejudices, something of a Puritan, a mystic, authoritative in his attitude and very cold in his feeling, read his reply: (a) 4:2-11, "Job, how can you who in times past have given help to so many in distress, and who are yourself righteous, feel such despair when, as you know, it is only the wicked that are destroyed by calamity."*

Twelfth day. § 81, (b) 4:12-21. A prophetic vision, seen in the night, coming from Heaven, a breath, a dim form, a still voice: "Man, weak, like the dust, ephemeral, cannot be righteous before a God who, counts angels foolish."

Thirteenth day. § 82. (c) The exhortation continues, Job 5:1-7: "Job, your complaining will not help, but rather destroy you" (vs. 1, 2). "I have seen just such a case; a fool, rebellious, but how suddenly destruction came, his house destroyed" (vs. 3-5). "The fact is trouble is not born of the soil" (v. 6), "but man has a nature which leads him to sin and so to trouble" (v. 7).

Fourteenth day. § 83. "If in your place I would seek God, who is great in power, who shows his goodness to the lowly, who disappoints the crafty and gives help to the poor," 5:8-16.

Fifteenth day. § 84. The exhortation still continues (d), 5:17-27: "Job, you ought to congratulate yourself upon being afflicted by God, who only afflicts in order that he may bless; all this trouble will come to an end, and you will once more be well and strong. Even the beasts and stones will be your friends: your family will be restored, your posterity will be great, and you will die of a good old age. This is the suggestion of long experience; I know that it is true. Accept it." Consider whether this speech was not too cold and too unsympathetic in view of the circumstances; whether (while perhaps true in general) it fitted the case of Job, who, as we well remember, had not sinned; and whether it might not be expected to have a bad effect upon his mind, increasing his trouble instead of diminishing it.

Sixteenth day. § 85. Remembering Job's condition and his need of sympathy, and recalling the harsh and severe words of Eliphaz, study now Job's reply: (a), 6:1-13, "My impatience is not great if you will measure it by the terrible sufferings, mental and physical, which God has sent upon me" (vs. 1-4). "Why do you not show your appreciation of my distress and measure it by the bitterness of the complaint" (vs. 5-7)? "Oh, that I might die and have rest; there is no hope for me; I cannot endure, for I am neither stone nor brass" (vs. 8-13).

Seventeenth day. (b) The pitiful complaint continues, 6:14-30: "Instead of kindness, which I have reason to expect, you have turned against me" (vs. 14-21); "and this has happened though I have never asked anything from you" (vs. 22, 23). "You think that I have sinned; point out my sins. You surely do not base your insinuations on the words of a man made desperate by suffering" (vs. 24-27). "Would I speak falsehood to your face? I declare my innocence. Am I so far gone as to be unable to distinguish good from evil" (vs. 28-43)?

Eighteenth day. Job's reply is not yet finished. (c) Read 7:1-21: "And besides my case is only typical of many. God is really an omnipotent slave-driver, filling the earth with wretches overworked by day and night; life is one long pain" (vs. 1-5). "Life is a weaver's shuttle, a wind, a cloud, and man goes away to be forgotten" (vs. 6-10). "I will not try to restrain myself; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. Is it because I am some dangerous monster that you should afflict me, that you should make me loathe life" (vs. 11-16)? Is not man too insignificant for you to cause him such torment? Will you not at all events let me alone that I may swallow my spittle" (vs. 17-19)? "Suppose I have sinned; what matters it to you? Why do you not overlook my transgression? You might as well, I shall soon die, and then you cannot find me."

*Study these verses (2-11) and decide for yourself whether this statement is in substance a satisfactory condensation of the passage.

Nineteenth day. § 86. Read now the first speech of Bildad, 8:1-22, who is represented as a sage, an observer, a philosopher whose mouth is full of past traditions and who is far less considerate even than Eliphaz. As Eliphaz represented prophecy, Bildad represents tradition. "Job, you should not speak of God in this way. God does not pervert justice. Your sons have perished because they were wicked. If you will turn to God and be pure you will be restored" (vs. 1-7). "Inquire of the ancients. We men of today know nothing. Can the rush grow without water? Can the wicked man prosper? Can the house of the godless stand" (vs. 8-15)? "The wicked man is a luxuriant plant, but he is soon destroyed and others take his place" (vs. 16-19). "The perfect man is never cast away by God. God will restore you if perfect, and those who hate you he will destroy" (vs. 20-22). Notice that Bildad believes Job to be guilty of a great sin.

Twentieth day. § 87. Read Job's second reply: (a) 9:1-14, "How can a man make his case appear right before God? I cannot contend with him without being hurt" (vs. 2-4). "Think of struggling against a God who is able to remove mountains, cause earthquakes, occasion eclipses of the sun" (vs. 5-7); "who creates the heavens and the stars, and does wonderful things" (vs. 8-10); "who exerts an invisible influence and wields irresponsible powers; before whom even the sea monsters stoop. How can I, a man, stand before such an one" (vs. 11-14)?

Twenty-first day. (b) The complaint of Job grows even worse, 9:16-35. "However innocent, I cannot secure satisfaction, for God will assault me though guiltless" (vs. 15-18). "God would prove me wicked although I am perfect, and again I assert my innocence, even at the risk of death" (vs. 19-21). "It matters not; good and bad alike are destroyed. The whole earth is in the hands of the wicked. If God is not responsible, then who is" (vs. 22-24)? "My days are swifter than a runner, or the reed ships, or the eagle. I try to take courage, but it is impossible. I am compelled to be guilty. Why should I worry about it? If I were to exhibit my innocence, thou, O God, would change it to the foulest impurity" (vs. 25-31). "I have no chance, for God is judge as well as accuser. He terrorizes me. He gives me no opportunity to speak. If he would remove affliction, I would speak without fear, for I am innocent" (vs. 31-35).

Twenty-second day. Job's plea becomes still more painful and personal, (c) 10:1-22: "I do not care to live, I will therefore speak out my mind. If you have a case against me, prove it" (vs. 1, 2). "Do you treat me thus because of caprice" (v. 3); "or because your vision is shortened so that you see only what is upon the surface," (v. 4) "or because your life is so short that you think I may escape you? You know that I am innocent" (vs. 5-7). "Is it possible that all the skill expended in my creation" (vs. 8-11) "and the kindness shown me in my early life were but a preparation for the suffering which you have sent upon me" (vs. 12, 13)? "Your plan seems to have been to make me wicked, whether or not; to wound me, guilty or innocent" (vs. 14-17). "Oh, that I had died from the womb. Leave me to myself that I may have a little comfort before I go down to Sheol" (vs. 18-22).

Twenty-third day. § 88. The third friend, Zophar, now comes forward, 11:1-20. He is a man of practical religion, arrogant, superficial, wordy: a man of strong personal convictions, who becomes irritated if anyone disputes his opinion. "You, Job, prove nothing. What presumption! If God would present the facts, you would see that your sufferings are less than you deserve" (11:2-6). "The wisdom of God is deeper than hell, longer than the earth, broader than the sea. He is all-powerful, he knows the heart's secrets. You are utterly foolish" (vs. 7-12). "But now put away evil, give up sin, and God will make your life happy and prosperous once more" (vs. 13-20).

Twenty-fourth day. § 89. The speech that follows in chapters 12, 13, 14, is in some respects the most striking of any of Job's utterances. (a) "Wisdom, I suppose, will die with you, Zophar. Do I not know as much of the greatness and power of God as you do?" Then follows the lofty description of God's power (12:1-25).

Twenty-fifth day. (b) 13:1-28: "But though I know all this it does not help me. It does not explain my calamities. I will appeal against this action of God. You defend him, but your defense is one of partisanship and servility. I desire to meet God and fight this out with him, come what may, I challenge him to answer me."

Twenty-sixth day. No answer comes, and Job again begins to despair. (c) 14:1-22: A sorrowful wail over the wretchedness of man, his weakness, God's rigid treatment of him, and the complete extinction of his life in death. In the depths of his despair there comes (v. 14) the thought or hope that there may be another life, and that he may be called into fellowship with God, but the man in his desperation falls back again into the gloom and darkness which had before surrounded him.

Twenty-seventh day. Consider now in review the idea of God which each friend presented, and by the presentation of which it was hoped Job's case could be settled.* Eliphaz pictures his moral purity and universal goodness, Bildad the discriminating justice in his control of the universe, Zophar the omniscient insight which guides his work. Verify this statement by rereading the speeches so far as may be necessary.

Twenty-eighth day. Notice that the first round of speeches by the friends, instead of helping Job has made his case worse. Why should this be? Did not the friends present a true conception of God? The conception was one which Job himself endorsed, but these statements, though true, did not fit Job's case. He still maintains his innocence, charges the friends with partisanship, and in no uncertain words sends a challenge to God himself. Of course the friends are more than ever convinced that Job is guilty of sin and therefore deserves the penalty that God has inflicted upon him.

Twenty-ninth day. Remember (1) that the prevailing conception at this stage in the development of Hebrew thought concerning God was that suffering was an indication that sin had been committed, (2) that Job is suffering, *but is not guilty of sin*. The question is, What is the explanation of Job's suffering if it is not sent upon him for sin? Or to put the question in more general form, does God send suffering for some other purpose than to punish sin?

*No one has presented this so clearly and definitely as Davidson in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, *Job*, a book which should have a place in every library.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

READ CAREFULLY.—Answer questions, as far as possible, from memory. Then take your Bible and review with the questions in mind, revising your answers as you read. Should you wish to work for a certificate, duplicate blanks for these questions will be sent on application to the office of the Institute, Hyde Park, Chicago, Ill., enclosing two-cent stamp. Blanks for the entire course will be sent at once. Any person sending in nine papers for the year will receive a certificate.

1. What is the literary form of the Book of Job?

.....

2. Describe the condition of Job at the opening of the story.....

.....

.....

.....

3. Name in order the calamities which came to him.....

.....

.....

.....

4. What is stated as the source and purpose of these calamities?

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.....

.....

5. Give any peculiarities of form which you can remember in the description of them

.....

.....

.....

6. Trace the change in Job's attitude in view of his troubles

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.....

7. What is the burden of his lament in 3:1-26?.....
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8. What idea of God and his dealings with men is presented in the speech of Eliphaz?.....
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-
-
9. Why does this speech bring no comfort to Job?.....
-
-
10. What is the keynote of Bildad's speech?.....
-
11. What is the great problem which confronts Job when he sees his own case as typical of many?.....
-
-
12. What was the opinion of Bildad the Sage upon this question?.....
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-
-
13. To whom does Job appeal to settle the matter and on what ground?.....
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-
-
14. What additional solution, if any, is presented by Zophar?.....
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15. Select from Job's speeches ten phrases which seem to you to most fully express his conception of the power of Jehovah?.....

HONOR QUESTIONS.

N. B. Any person answering the honor questions upon each of the nine question sheets in the year's course will receive a Special Honor sign upon his certificate. These questions may be studied previously, but must be answered from memory.

1. Is the problem discussed in the book of Job of universal or only local importance?.....
2. At what period in its history must it have been a specially important problem to the nation Israel?.....
3. Give in six adjectives a description of the characteristics of the God represented by the friends of Job.
4. What was Job's idea of an existence after death?
5. From the indications of his character shown in his attitude toward God and toward his friends what is your idea of the man Job?

ANALYTICAL OUTLINE.

II. THE BOOK OF JOB.

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| <p>§ 90. Eliphaz describes the fate of the wicked man.
Job, ch. 15.</p> <p>§ 91. Job again asserts his innocence, and cries to Heaven for justice.
Job, chs. 16, 17.</p> <p>§ 92. Bildad describes the life and end of the wicked man.
Job, ch. 18.</p> <p>§ 93. Job asserts his belief in ultimate vindication.
Job, ch. 19.</p> <p>§ 94. Zophar speaks concerning the fate of the wicked.
Job, ch. 20.</p> <p>§ 95. Job's theory concerning the life and death of the wicked man.
Job, ch. 21.</p> <p>§ 96. Eliphaz charges Job directly with great wickedness, and exhorts him to return to God.
Job, ch. 22.</p> <p>§ 97. Job still pleads with God to establish his innocence.
Job, ch. 23.</p> | <p>§ 98. Job regards his own case as typical of many, and declares that justice cannot be found.
Job, ch. 24.</p> <p>§ 99. Bildad's weak reply, asserting the greatness of God.
Job, ch. 25.</p> <p>§ 100. Job replies: Justice, not greatness, the problem.
Job, ch. 26.</p> <p>§ 101. Another description of the fate of the wicked man.
Job, ch. 27.</p> <p>§ 102. The description of Wisdom.
Job, ch. 28.</p> <p>§ 103. Job's retrospect of his past position.
Job, ch. 29.</p> <p>§ 104. His present miserable condition in contrast.
Job, ch. 30.</p> <p>§ 105. Job's assertion of innocence repeated, and the Almighty again challenged.
Job, ch. 31.</p> |
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SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY.

NOTE.—The section numbers refer to the sections of the preceding Outline.

Abbreviations: R. V., Revised Version of the Bible; A. V., Authorized or Old Version of the Bible; *cf.*, compare; *i. e.*, that is; *ff.*, following.

NOTE.—Do not deprive yourself of three-fourths of the satisfaction that may be gained from a study of the Book of Job by using the Old Version. Remember that the Book of Job is the greatest piece of poetic literature known to man, and that this poetry, as we have observed in the study of the Book of Proverbs, exhibits itself in what is called synonymous, antithetic, or synthetic parallelism. This parallelism is exhibited in the Revised Version in such a way as to make the book an entirely new book. It is impossible to understand any book without some comprehension of its literary spirit.

First day. § 90. Remembering that after the presentation of the case of Job, the story of his disease and his distress, the three friends had each spoken once in reference to his situation, and to each of these speeches Job had made a reply. Let us now take up the second cycle of speeches in which the three friends, from a somewhat different point of view, again approach Job's case. Read (a) Job 15:1-6 in which Eliphaz who was, we will remember, represented as a *Prophet* (see § 80) again begins: "Job, would a wise man give an answer that which is empty? You are an impious creature, trying to break down the fear of God. Your guilt is shown by your language." (b) vs. 7-11, spoken ironically: "I want to know where this great wisdom of yours comes from. Were you the first man? Were you acquainted with the counsels of God? The consolations of your friends which were from God seem to have been of little value in your sight." (c) vs. 12-16. "Why are you so foolish as, in your excitement, to charge God with injustice? Man, corrupt, iniquitous, cannot be pure in the sight of a God who deems angels impure." The general attitude of Eliphaz's mind has not suffered change.

Second day. Eliphaz goes on: (d) Job 15:17-19, "What I am about to say has been handed down from past generations of noble blood. Its accuracy may be guaranteed." (e) vs. 20-24, "The wicked man suffers incalculable pain throughout his life; his life is one long anticipation of death, starvation, calamity, and anguish." (f) vs. 25-28, "Because he has disobeyed God and acted unrighteously," (g) vs. 29-35. "Consequently he shall never prosper; his fate shall be destruction; he is cut off in the midst of his days; his house perishes; he is an utter failure."

Third day. § 91. In Job's first set of speeches he had appealed to God. No answer had come. To his friends this is satisfactory evidence of guilt. As Davidson has suggested, from this point forward God and man have both forsaken him. In the first cycle he met God's enmity alone; now universal alienation has come. Read his reply: (a) Job 16:1-5, "Ye are wretched comforters. Let the subject drop. I, too, could string out windy words and toss the head, give mouth-comfort and sympathy from the lips." (b) vs. 6-11, "Neither speech nor silence avails anything: my friends are against me; my affliction they regard an evidence of guilt. God pounces upon me like a beast of prey; men, too, beset me like beasts. I am given into the hands of the wicked." (c) vs. 12-14, "How has he treated me? He has shattered me; he has caught me by the neck and shaken me; he has made me a mark at which to shoot arrows; he has battered me as with a battering ram. And what is the result?" (d) vs. 15-17, "Although entirely innocent my head is in the dust; my face is inflamed with weeping; darkness is on my eyes."

Fourth day. Job continues, (e) Job 16:18-17:2, "Let my blood appeal to heaven. I am sure that I have a sponsor in heaven. My friends scorn me, but I will go to God that he may do me justice, for I shall soon die." (f) 17:3-9, "Establish now my innocence before thyself, O God. No one else can do it, for you have blinded their hearts. I am a reproach, men spit in my face, my eye is dim, my members a shadow. Surely the righteous must be confounded at this condition of things." (g) vs. 10-16, "You so-called friends are utterly incapable; not one of you is wise. My life and its purposes are broken off. I have no hope; rest may be found only in the dust."

Fifth day. § 92. It is evident that Job has spoken plainly both concerning his friends and God. Bildad, the sage observer, philosopher (see § 86), now feels that he in turn must speak his mind without constraint. Read (a) 18:1-4, "How long, Job, will you strain yourself thus? Exhibit some common sense. Why do you treat us as beasts and as unclean? O passionate one, shall the whole moral order of the universe be changed for you?" In the remainder of his speech he paints a picture of Job and his circumstances, (b) vs. 5-7, "The light of the sinner goes out, and his path is in darkness." (c) vs. 8-11, "His pathway is through snares and traps, terrors on every side." (d) vs. 12-14, "His strength at last gives out, disease attacks him. He is plucked away." (e) vs. 15-17, "His name and race are extinguished." (f) vs. 18-21, "He is driven out, no one succeeds him, men are horror-stricken at his fate. This is the life and the end of the wicked man."

Sixth day. § 93. Let us prepare ourselves now to find Job springing at one bound from the lowest despair to the highest hope. Read his reply to Bildad: (a) 19:1-6, "How long must I suffer your intermeddling reproaches! If you are determined to reproach me, know that it is God who has done it all." "Yes," (b) vs. 7-12, "God is absolutely hostile to me. He gives no answer to my cry; all is darkness. I am a building torn down, a tree with roots torn up. God counts me as an enemy; he attacks me." But this is not all, (c) 13-20, "Men have deserted me. My kinsmen have fled. My servants even treat me as a stranger. I am intolerable to my family; children mock me: my friends abhor me." (d) vs. 21, 22, "Have pity on me, O my friends, for God's hand has touched me. Why will you continue to persecute me?"

Seventh day. Job's cry continues: (e) vs. 23-29, the sufferer in his utter despair realizes that after all there is no help in his friends. Turning from them he utters the plaintive appeal (vs. 23, 24), "O that my assertions of innocence were written in a book, or stamped upon a rock." Realizing that there is no help in this world, but believing that God would somehow vindicate him, he exclaims (vs. 25-27), "I believe that God will yet vindicate me, and show my innocence upon earth when I have died. And when this my skin is destroyed I shall see God and be at peace with him, and he at peace with me." But so intense is the feeling, so strong the excitement, that at this juncture there come the words "I faint." Reviving after a moment, he turns again to the friends (vs. 28, 29), "If you continue your persecution beware of the sword, for wrath will bring punishment." Note that God has been called by Job, "Witness," "Sponsor," and now "Redeemer," but the word "Redeemer" here means vindicator, and is the Hebrew word which describes the nearest of kin who should vindicate the cause of a dead relative.

Eighth day. § 94. At this point Zophar, the man of practical religion (see § 86), seems to interrupt Job (a) 20:1-3, "Your words make me indignant, and I am urgent to speak." Then follows Zophar's description of the wicked man, (b) 4-11, "Do you not know that from the day man was placed upon the earth the fate of the wicked has always been the same? The triumph of the wicked is short;" (c) 12-22, "According to a man's life so is his chastisement;" (d) 23-29, "Man's greed is always filled; but only with God's judgment."

Ninth day. Let us stop a moment to review the three speeches of the friends before reading Job's final reply. It will be noted, as Davidson has so clearly pointed out, that while the first cycle of speeches had to do with God, the second set has to do with the condition of the wicked. Test this statement by comparing roughly the statement in the outline covering the chapters involved, *i. e.*, from the first cycle of speeches read over again from Direction Sheet No. 4 what is said from the twelfth to the twenty-fourth days.

Tenth day. It is also to be noted that each of the friends regards the punishment of the wicked differently; (a) Eliphaz, in ch. 15, understands this punishment to come as the result of the working of the conscience of the wicked man and with reference to his fate; (b) Bildad, in ch. 18, represents the punishment as coming from the order of nature, and the moral instinct of mankind; (c) Zophar, in ch. 20, represents it as coming from the retributive operation of sin upon itself. Verify these statements.*

Eleventh day. § 95. These three conceptions of the wicked man and his punishment having been presented, what has Job to say? Read (a) 21:2-6, "Suppose you console me at last by listening, and when I have spoken you may continue your mocking. When I think of what I am compelled to bear, horror seizes me." (b) 7-16, "I tell you that the wicked live and grow strong. Their posterity endures. Their houses are safe, their cattle thrive, their children are happy and gleeful. They live in pleasure and die without pain although they desire not God and regard his worship as of no account." (c) vs. 17-21, "How often do they suffer destruction? How often are they as stubble or chaff? God, you say, punishes their children. Why does he not touch them? Let God bring punishment upon the wicked man himself, for he cares nothing for his posterity when he is dead."

Twelfth day. Job's reply in reference to the real situation of the wicked man continues, (d) vs. 22-26, "You are trying to teach God how to judge the world. The fact is one man dies quietly and at ease in the midst of plenty, another dies in bitterness, having had no enjoyment. Both alike lie down, and the worm covers them." (e) vs. 26-34, "I know your insinuations, but these only show your ignorance of the facts gained by travel. Is it not the universal testimony that the wicked is spared in the day of judgment? He is brought to the grave in honor, death is sweet to him, men follow his example as when he was alive. Of what value are all your consolations of this kind?"

Thirteenth day. Consider once more the position of the friends (that the wicked man is always punished) and the different representations of each friend as to the source of his punishment. (See tenth day.) Consider in connection with these representations the sum and substance of Job's last speech (see twelfth day), in which he denies the facts asserted by the friends and maintains that the wicked are not always punished; that not infrequently they live happily and die honored. *The friends have generalized upon a false basis.*

Fourteenth day. It might not be out of place at this time to read the statement on the Direction Sheet of last month for the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth days, in reference to the conception of God presented by the friends, and Job's different point of view regarding it. This will throw light upon the difference between the positions of Job and his friends with respect to the punishment of the wicked.

*For a fuller discussion of these particular thoughts, see Davidson's "Job."

Fifteenth day. § 96. Since the argument based upon the conception of God proves nothing, because, as Job says, it does not apply to his own case; and since the argument upon the condition of the wicked proves nothing, since Job denies the facts upon which the argument is based, what is left for the friends to say in a further cycle of speeches? Let us take up the speeches as before one by one. Eliphaz is again the first to speak, and now charges Job directly with the wickedness at which before he had only hinted, (a) Job 22:1-4, "Is God in any way affected by the action of a man? Is he personally concerned in man's righteousness? Is he likely to chastise a man because he is pious?" (b) vs. 5-9, "The fact is, Job, your iniquity is very great; you have stripped the naked of clothing, have denied food and drink to the hungry, have oppressed the widow and fatherless," and (c) vs. 10, 11, "snares and sudden fear are round about you. Darkness and great waters cover you." (d) vs. 12-20, "How could you do these things? I will tell you. You thought God was far distant in heaven, that thick clouds would prevent his seeing, that God could not exert influence upon you. You were like the wicked men of old destroyed by the flood, who thought that after all God was not ruling in the world." "Now," (e) vs. 21-30, "I have hinted at this before. I now declare it boldly. Come in contact again with God. Receive his instruction. Throw away greed. Let God be thy treasure. Take delight in the Almighty. Pray to him and he will hear you, and when you are cast down, he will lift you up. God will even lift up the guilty, when he has again become pure."

Sixteenth day. § 97. Does Job answer these direct charges? No. His mind is occupied with what Davidson calls "the painful mystery of God's power." He sees on every side misery and crime, and feels that God does not seem to see it or to heed it. His mind still dwells on this thought. Read (a) 23:1-17, in which the thought seems to be as follows, "O, that I could find God's judgment seat. I would plead my cause before him. I would ascertain his charges against me. He would not merely exhibit his omnipotent power, but he would give heed to me, and he would find that an innocent man was pleading with him, and he would give deliverance. But behold I find him nowhere, neither on the left hand nor on the right. He knows that I am innocent, and that if I were to be tried I could be proved innocent. I have obeyed his commands. I have kept his words. But he is determined. Nothing will change his purpose. He will bring me to death. God terrifies and alarms me."

Seventeenth day. § 98. (Read 24:1-25), "God, it is true, disregards justice in my case, but the same disregard may be seen everywhere;" (a) 1-4, "Why does he not give justice to the world? See how landmarks are removed, and flocks stolen, how the fatherless and widow are robbed, and the poor and needy are compelled to hide themselves." (b) vs. 5-8, "See how poor outcasts are compelled to live like beasts in the wilderness with no food, no clothing." (c) vs. 9-12, "See how the poor are crushed by the rich, and go about without clothing, without food, making the rich richer, themselves growing poorer." (d) vs. 13-17, "See how the world is full of works of darkness, murderers, adulterers, robbers." The popular view concerning these wicked doers is, (e) vs. 18-21, "that they suffer punishment for their sins, and are cursed," but (f) vs. 22-24, "the facts are just the opposite. The wicked are continued in power, they are exalted, they are taken away suddenly and without pain, they are cut off, but only when they have attained to full ripeness." (g) v. 25, "If these are not the facts, who will prove me a liar? There is a universal lack of justice in the world. Such a thing as justice cannot be found."

Eighteenth day. § 99. We should now expect Bildad to say something in reply to the facts just presented by Job. He, however, does not notice these, and thus practically acknowledges defeat. Nor does he say anything else of importance, for he only repeats a few glittering generalities. Read ch. 25:2, "To God belong dominion and power;" v. 3, "his influence is exerted everywhere;" v. 4, "How then, God being such an one, can man be righteous before him?" v. 5, "In his sight the stars are impure;" v. 6, "How then can man, who is a worm, stand before him?"

Nineteenth day. § 100. Job had already accepted all that Bildad said. His contention was that no light was shed by it upon the problem. In reply he sarcastically refers, (a) 26:1-4, to the great help which he has furnished, the large amount of wisdom he has poured out. The fact is, the question is not one of God's greatness; nobody denies that. The question is one of his *justice*. Then in the remainder of ch. 26 follows a more wonderful description than any that has been given of the greatness and majesty of God; (b) vs. 5, 6, in the underworld; (c) vs. 7-14 in heaven and earth.

Twentieth day. § 101. It is Zophar's time to speak, but according to the text Zophar fails to put in an appearance. After a while Job again resumes the discussion in ch. 27. In this chapter the speaker, (a) vs. 2-6, asserts his innocence; (b) vs. 7-10, describes the dreary and desolate condition of the wicked man's mind in affliction; (c) vs. 11-23, pictures the disastrous fate of the wicked. Read the chapter and satisfy yourself that this is the analysis, but recognize the difficulty* which arises when you place this chapter in the mouth of Job, contradicting as it does Job's former utterances concerning the fate of the wicked. (See twelfth day.)

Twenty-first day. § 102. Read Job 28, remembering that in some respects it is the most magnificent chapter of the book, describing "Wisdom." (a) vs. 1-14, "One may find precious ores and precious stones, but Wisdom is not to be found in the land of the living;" (b) vs. 15-22, "Wisdom may not be purchased in the market place, nor can it be discovered in the underworld;" (c) vs. 23-28, "The way to Wisdom is to be found only through God, who created it, since Wisdom is the fear of the Lord." Ask yourself what purpose this chapter serves in the progress of the discussion of Job and his friends, and recognize the difficulties which it, as well as ch. 27, raises.†

Twenty-second day. § 103. The case of Job seems to him more helpless than ever. He now looks back upon the happiness of the past. Read the regretful retrospect in ch. 29; (a) vs. 2-10, in which he mentions those things which made up his peculiar happiness; (b) vs. 11-17, in which he explains the reason of this universal reverence, viz., his benevolence and impartial justice; (c) vs. 18-20, in which he depicts the sure outlook which existed for his future prosperity in the midst of this universal respect; (d) vs. 21-25, in which he describes the great satisfaction which he had in his intercourse with those who came to him.

Twenty-third day. § 104. In striking contrast with this picture of the past is the miserable condition of the present. Read chapter 30, in which (a) vs. 1-8, he pictures the ignoble wretches who now despise him; (b) vs. 9-15, he describes the indignities to which they subject him; (c) vs. 16-23, he pictures the dreadful condition to which he has been reduced; and (d) vs. 24-31, he again and again contrasts his present condition with the former days when he himself took compassion upon those who were in trouble.

Twenty-fourth day. § 105. Has Job said enough? No. Has he said many times that he is innocent of the sins charged against him by his friends? Yes, but he will say it again, more strongly than ever before. Read ch. 31, (a) vs. 1-12, an absolute denial of secret sins; (b) vs. 13-23, an absolute denial that he abused the power given him, or that he was selfish and indifferent to suffering; (c) vs. 24-31, a statement denying other sins which may have been charged against him; and now, (d) vs. 35-40, he breaks out again, "O, that there were some one to hear me. I pledge myself that these statements are correct; let the Almighty answer. Why will he not enter his charge?² If he would but give me the indictment, I would bind it as a crown upon my head; I would declare to him every act of my life; I would go to him with my head lifted up like a prince. Again I say if my land has been secured unjustly and therefore cries out against me, if I have eaten the fruit thereof without money, or have brought oppression upon its owners, let thorns grow instead of wheat, and weeds instead of barley."

Twenty-fifth day. As you think back and recall how the writer of this book has represented the discussion between Job and his friends, is there any doubt in your mind that he wished himself, as the author of the book, to endorse the views of Job as against those taught by the friends? Do you ask how he did this artistically? The answer is found in the weakness of the last cycle of speeches on the part of the friends, in which one is altogether gone, another is very short and general, and the third merely a repetition of what had been said before. If you wish further evidence of this, read 32:3-5, in which the author represents Elihu as recognizing the failure of the friends, also 40:7, in which God is represented as angry with the friends because they have not spoken of him the thing that was right, as his servant Job had done.

*These difficulties have led to several proposed solutions. Among others may be mentioned (1) that at all events vs. 7-23 are a lost speech of Zophar, (2) that the chapter is a parody and intended to mean exactly the opposite of what it says, and (3) that the chapter has been inserted by some later writer, and has no real connection with the progress of the discussion.

†The difficulties may only be mentioned. Does not the thought of the chapter seem to furnish the climax of the book? and therefore would it not be more appropriate after the wonderful speeches out of the mouth of Jehovah beginning chapter 28? It has been suggested by some that this chapter likewise did not form a part of the original Book of Job. Whether this is true or not, everyone will recognize that this is the greatest chapter of the book. If 27:7-23; 28:1-28 were omitted, would the thought of the writer suffer? This question cannot be answered until you have studied chapters 29, 30, 31.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

READ CAREFULLY.—Answer questions, as far as possible, from memory. Then take your Bible and review with the questions in mind, revising your answers as you read. Should you wish to work for a certificate, duplicate blanks for these questions will be sent on application to the office of the Institute, Hyde Park, Chicago, Ill., enclosing two-cent stamp. Blanks for the entire course will be sent at once. Any person sending in the nine papers for the year will receive a certificate.

1. What was the theory of the occasion of Job's suffering advanced by the friends in the first set of speeches studied last month?

2. What does Eliphaz in ch. 15 assert concerning the fate of the wicked man?

3. What does Bildad add to this in ch. 18?

4. What attitude does Job now assume toward these friends?

5. Where does Job place the responsibility for his suffering?

6. What significant names have been given by Job to God thus far?

7. What is Zophar's theory concerning the wicked man?

8. What is Job's theory concerning the life and death of the wicked man?

9. How does this affect the value of the arguments of the friends?

10. How does it change their attitude in the speeches immediately following?

11. Give in few words, but as vividly as possible, the description of Wisdom from ch. 28.

12. As Job looks about him and sees the condition of things in the world, with what does he charge God ?

13. Give the points under Job's last and strongest assertion of innocence.....

14. Give briefly Job's picture of his past happiness and present miserable condition

15. Has any progress been made toward a solution of the problem under consideration ?

HONOR QUESTIONS.

N. B. Any person answering the honor questions upon each of the nine question sheets in the year's course will receive a Special Honor sign upon his certificate. These questions may be studied previously, but must be answered from memory.

1. What is the distinctive difference in subject between the first and second set of speeches ?.....

2. What change, if any, has taken place (a) in the charges of the friends, (b) in the attitude of Job toward God ?.....

3. State the situation as it now stands

4. Have the friends done anything toward bettering either Job's spirit or his condition ?

5. Upon which side of the argument does the writer of the book seem to be ? Give the evidence.....

ANALYTICAL OUTLINE.

III. THE BOOK OF JOB.

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|--|---|
| <p>§ 106. The Introduction of Elihu. Job 32:1-5.</p> <p>§ 107. Elihu's declaration of wisdom, and ability to answer Job. Job 32:6-22.</p> <p>§ 108. Elihu declares Job's assertion of innocence false. Job 33:1-7.</p> <p>§ 109. Elihu's Theory concerning (a) the purpose of affliction: to turn men from sin. Job 33:13-33</p> <p>§ 110. (b) The nature of God: just, rewarding man in this life according to his work. Job 34:1-37.</p> <p>§ 111. (c) The folly of Job in misunderstanding the purpose of his afflictions. Job 35:1-16.</p> | <p>§ 112. The idea of God's greatness further developed and illustrated. Job, chs. 36, 37.</p> <p>§ 113. Jehovah answers out of the storm announcing his supremacy in nature. Job, chs. 38, 39.</p> <p>§ 114. Job's humility and inability to reply. Job 40:1-5.</p> <p>§ 115. Jehovah's second speech. Job 40:7-41:34.</p> <p>§ 116. Job's retraction and Jehovah's final word. Job 42:1-7.</p> <p>§ 117. The Epilogue. Job 42:10-16</p> |
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SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY.

NOTE.—The section numbers refer to the sections of the preceding Outline.

Abbreviations: R. V., Revised Version of the Bible; A. V., Authorized or Old Version of the Bible; *cf.*, compare; *i. e.*, that is; *ff.*, following.

NOTE.—Do not deprive yourself of three-fourths of the satisfaction that may be gained from a study of the Book of Job by using the Old Version. Remember that the Book of Job is the greatest piece of poetic literature known to man, and that this poetry, as we have observed in the study of the Book of Proverbs, exhibits itself in what is called synonymous, antithetic, or synthetic parallelism. This parallelism is exhibited in the Revised Version in such a way as to make the book an entirely new book. It is impossible to understand any book without some comprehension of its literary spirit.

First day. Using Direction Sheet No. 4 review rapidly chs. 1-14. Remember (1) the situation, Job's righteousness and prosperity, the calamities which befall him, his inability to understand them, his rebellious spirit; (2) the discussion of the friends, Eliphaz presenting arguments from the point of view of the prophet, Bildad representing the wisdom of the Sages, and Zophar the man of practical religion. Recall their immediate assumption of the wickedness of Job and that his sufferings are a result of his sins; also their representations of God, supremely good, pure, just in his discriminations, omniscient in insight and power. Did this agree with Job's view? Was he innocent or guilty? If innocent did these arguments explain his sufferings? Job, you will remember, challenges God to witness for him and to prove his innocence or his guilt?

Second day. Continue the review with Direction Sheet No. 5 (chs. 14-31). Recall (1) the further speeches of the friends, still assuming the wickedness of Job, and discoursing fluently upon the miserable fate of the wicked man as a result of his sin; (2) Job's reply in which he asserts and proves from his experience of life, that the wicked are not always punished, that they frequently prosper in this life and die happy and honored by the world; (3) the futile attempts of the friends to present a satisfactory answer to these statements, and (4) Job's final challenge to Jehovah to prove at the same time his own justice and the innocence of Job.

Third day. § 106. Read Job 32:1-5, and note the occasion of the end of the discussion, as likewise the occasion of the wrath of Elihu a new character in the drama. Determine how Elihu must have interpreted Job's speeches, as well as those of his friends. From this statement would you think Elihu in sympathy with Job, or with his friends?

Fourth day. § 107. Read Job 32:6-14, and analyze the attitude of Elihu. (a) Why he has kept silent up to this time, vs. 6, 7; (b) the source of real wisdom, vs. 8, 9; (c) the policy which it seemed necessary for him to adopt, vs. 10-14.

Fifth day. Read Job 32:15-22 in which Elihu (a) announces the rout of his friends, v. 15, (b) announces his determination to speak, vs. 16, 17; (c) indicates his conviction that he can do what the friends did not do, vs. 18-20; and (d) declares that he will speak fearlessly and without regard to anyone, vs. 20-22.

Sixth day. § 108. Read Job 33:1-7, in which he again, in his voluble style, declares that he will speak honestly, and challenges Job to an argument, also vs. 8-12, in which he distinctly announces that Job's statement that he was clean and without iniquity, is altogether wrong.

Seventh day. § 109. Read Job 33:13-33, in which Elihu (a) shows that God speaks in many ways, namely through dreams and visions in order to save men from evil, vs. 13-18; (b) asserts that this is the purpose of affliction, vs. 19-22; (c) adds that messengers are sent to interpret the affliction, vs. 23, 24; (d) describes the restoration of the sufferer and his thankfulness, vs. 25-28; (e) explains that all this is done by God to turn men away from sin, vs. 29, 30; (f) and then calls upon Job to answer him or to remain quiet, vs. 31-33. Might we sum up this statement in these words? God's afflictions have a purpose; they do not indicate arbitrary hostility on his part toward the person afflicted.

Eighth day. § 110. Elihu continues, and (a) 34:1-4, commands Job to listen as he pushes further his investigations, (b) considers in detail Job's charges and shows that they indicate great impiety, vs. 5-9, for (c) God is not unjust; he rewards every man according to his work, vs. 10-12; (d) God arranges the world. What motive could he have for injustice? Vs. 13-15. (e) Rule is impossible without justice, and injustice in God is inconceivable, vs. 16-20.

Ninth day. Read Job 34:21-37, and examine closely the three propositions mentioned: (a) that God's omniscient insight into man in itself secures justice, vs. 21-28; (b) who can object when God commands or distributes his favors and afflictions? To object is to usurp the place of God, vs. 29-33; (c) every man of intelligence will agree that Job speaks without wisdom, vs. 34-37.

Tenth day. § 111. Job has said that the wicked and the righteous have the same fortune, and that under God's administration nothing is gained by being righteous. Read Job 35:1-16, Elihu's third reply in which he (1) states the position of Job, and proposes to answer it, vs. 1-4; (2) declares that God is affected by neither sin nor righteousness, these things only touching men, vs. 5-8; (3) maintains that the exceptions to the general principle are only apparent, the cries of the oppressed which God does not answer being like the cry of a beast, and without indication of trust in God. The fact is, Job is a fool, vs. 9-16.

Eleventh day. § 112. Elihu, having discussed certain principles, now becomes dogmatic, and presents his own conception. Read Job 36:1-15, in which (1) he asserts that he is perfect in knowledge and therefore able to controvert Job, vs. 1-4; (2) develops the thought of God's greatness and his justice, v. 5. Does he send affliction? Yes, but only for instruction, in order that men may be turned from their sins, vs. 6-15.

Twelfth day. Elihu now turns directly to Job and informs him 36:16-25, that all this affliction has been sent to lead him to a better life. Let Job be careful not to misunderstand the affliction and complain; let him rather magnify God, as do all men.

Thirteenth day. Elihu now gives examples of God's supreme greatness. The fact is (1) he is so great as to be unknowable, 36:26; (2) study his greatness in the raindrop which he draweth away, the clouds pouring them upon mankind, vs. 27, 28; (3) study his greatness as seen in the thunder-storm with its clouds and lightning; these are the muttering of his voice, the voice of his majesty, 36:29-37:5; (4) study his greatness as seen in the snow and ice, 37:6-10; (5) study his greatness as seen in the movement of the clouds, vs. 11-13.

Fourteenth day. Read the concluding words of Elihu as applied to the case of Job, in 37:14-24. In view of God's greatness what have you to say? What shall we say to him? Shall we command him? Can a man look at the Sun? The Almighty is unsearchable.

Fifteenth day. Let us think back through chapters 32 to 37, and recall: (1) that to Job's assertion of God's arbitrary hostility (because no answer has come to him notwithstanding his appeal), Elihu says: God does speak in many ways, and his messengers give warning; this warning if heeded, brings restoration. (2) To Job's assertion of injustice, in perverting his right, although he is innocent, Elihu says only an impious wretch would say this. Why should God be unjust? He must be supremely good, for he holds in his hands the life of all. How could he rule if he were not just? It is impossible for him to be unjust because he is omniscient. Would Job like to take the place of God, and manage the world for awhile? Job is a fool. Go back through these chapters and find where these sentiments are expressed in substance.

Sixteenth day. Let us recall (1) that to Job's statement that it avails a man nothing to be godly, Elihu says: God is too exalted to be affected by either the wickedness or the godliness of man. In those cases where God does not hear the cry, the cry is not genuine, but is like that of an animal; (2) the final and fundamental position of Elihu, namely God's greatness, and (3) though so great, he does not despise the weak. His afflictions are sent in kindness to bring back the sinner to the true path. This greatness is to be seen on every side in all the phenomena of nature.

Seventeenth day. Perhaps time ought to be taken to compare Elihu's statements with those of the three friends. He agrees with them in the opinion (1) that suffering is due to sin, (2) that God is always just, (3) that Job is a sinner and rebellious, (4) that these afflictions have been sent to draw him from his sin. It may be noted that Elihu says in addition, not as much as we expected, but (1) that affliction is sent to warn men from sin into which they are likely to fall, (2) that affliction is the expression of God's goodness.*

*It is hardly possible to take up the question whether the speeches of Elihu are perhaps the work of a later writer, and not a part of the original book of Job. A good many arguments may be presented in favor of such a view, but on the other hand this view introduces a number of serious difficulties. In any case, perhaps, you may ask yourself, (1) why Elihu is not mentioned in the prologue or in the epilogue, (2) why the style of the Elihu speeches is so diffuse and circumstantial as compared with that of the rest of the book, (3) why Job does not reply, (4) why the language of the sections is so exceedingly peculiar, (5) why six chapters furnish so little new thought, especially when Elihu started out so boisterously.

Eighteenth day. § 113. The dramatic action has now reached its highest point. One asks, what next? It is the answer of Jehovah out of the storm. The storm covers up Job and adds color to the scene. It is the word of Jehovah himself that we are now to study. Read (1) Job 38:2-7, in which Jehovah announces himself as ready to answer the challenge of Job, but he answers by asking Job to declare how the earth, with its foundations, its corner stone, laid with the songs of angels and stars, was created? Was Job present at the creation? Can he tell? Or (2), 38:8-11, perhaps Job, if he knows, will tell who created that great giant the ocean, breaking forth from the earth's interior, permitted to rage, but only within set bounds?

Nineteenth day. Read Job 38:12-15. (1) Who is it that brings the morning with all that it involves, or (2) 38:16-18, has Job walked in the depths of the ocean, has he seen the gates of Sheol, can he comprehend the breadth of the earth?

Twentieth day. Read now what is perhaps the most beautiful section of the book, Job 38:18-38, in which there is given (including now 38:1-17 also) a rapid sketch of inanimate nature, the wonders of earth and sea, the dawn, Sheol, the phenomena of the heavens, light, darkness, snow, hail, rain, lightning, all of which show God, his power, might, wisdom. Perhaps Job created all these and regulates their going and coming.

Twenty-first day. The poet now leaves the realm of inanimate nature and ascends to the animal kingdom. This review includes (Job 38:39-39:30); (1) the lioness, vs. 39, 40; (2) the young raven, v. 41; (3) the goats and hinds of the rock, 39:1-4; (4) the wild ass, vs. 5-8; (5) the wild ox, vs. 9-12; (6) the ostrich, vs. 13-18; (7) the war horse, vs. 19-25; (8) the hawk, v. 26; (9) the eagle, vs. 27-30.

Twenty-second day. § 114. Gathering his whole strength the speaker turns to Job and demands, 40:2 "Do you still arrogantly demand the contest with God, now that you know his power?" Job (40:3-5) having seen God in another light, replies most humbly, and acknowledges his meanness and his inability to answer.

Twenty-third day. § 115. Although Job no longer wishes to contend with God, it is necessary that his charge against God of unrighteousness be refuted; and so we have a second speech of Jehovah. Read 40:7-14. Will Job be willing to take God's place as ruler of the world? If he will show his ability thus to dispense justice God will recognize his power to act independently. But really, now, can Job contend with the God who created such creatures as the hippopotamus and the crocodile?

Twenty-fourth day. Read the wonderfully strong and striking description of the hippopotamus 40:15-24, and the crocodile, 41:1-34.

Twenty-fifth day. § 116. Read now Job's answer, 42:1-6, in which he retracts all that he has said, and the account, 42:7-9 of Jehovah's anger against the friends, and his feeling that after all, Job has represented him rightly.

Twenty-sixth day. § 117. Read the conclusion found in the Epilogue, 42:10-16, in which Job is given double what he formerly possessed, friends return to him, more children are born to him, and his life prolonged.

Twenty-seventh day. How now is one to regard the book of Job? The author has been given, from on high, a new and higher conception of God. This author is living at a time when men are suffering, though they are confident of their innocence, and at the same time feel that God has refused to hear their cries. The author believes that the remedy for the situation is this broader and deeper conception of God which has been revealed to him. He therefore makes an effort to convey this idea to the men of his times. He puts his thought in a literary form, the most magnificent the world has ever seen. Job represents the case of the sufferer. The friends and Elihu represent the conceptions of God which had hitherto prevailed, but which were not broad enough to cover the case. In the speeches of Jehovah out of the whirlwind the true conception is given, and the suffering one seeing (as the new light breaks in upon him) this new conception of God, now humbly acknowledges that he has hitherto misunderstood God, and that now his eyes are open. For a full and clear exposition of all this see Davidson's "Job," pp. 23-29.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

READ CAREFULLY.—Answer questions, as far as possible, from memory. Then take your Bible and review with the questions in mind, revising your answers as you read. Should you wish to work for a certificate, duplicate blanks for these questions will be sent on application to the office of the Institute, Hyde Park, Chicago, Ill., enclosing two-cent stamp. Blanks for the entire course will be sent at once. Any person sending in nine papers for the year will receive a certificate.

1. What new character in the drama is introduced this month?.....

.....

2. Give your idea of Elihu's character as he represents himself in his introduction and in his speeches

.....

.....

3. What is his theory (a) of Job's character? (b) of the purpose of affliction?.....

.....

.....

4. What are the chief qualities in his conception of God?.....

.....

.....

5. Name the illustrations which he uses to prove the greatness of God.....

.....

.....

6. What reason does Elihu give for God's failure to answer the cries of the suffering in all cases?.....

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7. By what argument does he establish God's justice?.....

.....

.....

8. What opinion concerning Job and his afflictions has been held by all four speakers in common?.....

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9. By what means does Jehovah's answer finally come?.....

.....

10. (a) Does it confirm the opinion of the friends? (b) By what questions does it silence Job?

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11. Name ten of the phenomena of animate and inanimate nature by which Jehovah illustrates his majesty
power and righteousness.....

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12. What is the effect upon Job?

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13. What are the evidences of Job's final vindication?

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.....

14. What is Jehovah's attitude toward the friends?
-
-
15. State now (a) the literary form of the book.....
-
- (b) the purpose of the writer.....
-
- (c) your opinion as to whether the book may have had in Israel a national as well as a personal application
-

HONOR QUESTIONS.

N. B. Any person answering the honor questions upon each of the nine question sheets in the year's course will receive a Special Honor sign upon his certificate. These questions may be studied previously, but must be answered from memory.

1. In your estimation, how does the writer of the book of Job compare in his character of Sage or Philosopher with those of the book of Proverbs.....
-
-
2. Would you expect him to belong to a later or an earlier period of history?
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-
3. How does this poem as a piece of literature bear comparison with the masterpieces of other literatures?
-
-
-
4. Is the lesson it teaches one of a limited or a universal application?
-
-
-
5. Did the writer solve the problem of suffering in the world, or simply confute the theory, that all suffering is necessarily a punishment for the sin of the sufferer?
-
-
-

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